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## Casts & Forecasts:

# Audiences 'Join' Hitchcock Films

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Audiences which see Alfred Hitchcock motion pictures are probably not aware of it, but they are helping him to make a success of his efforts by becoming emotionally involved in the suspense of the action.

"It's all planned that way," the film-maker said on his recent visit to Dallas, "and this emotional involvement, I believe, actually makes for better enjoyment of the motion picture."

Hitchcock, who was here last week to talk about "Topaz," his newest motion picture, has used the emotional aspects of suspense in most of the 51 movies which bear his signature, including "Topaz."

"There is," he said, "a difference between suspense and surprise, just as there is a difference between suspense and adventure and the detective whodunit"

FROM BOTH VIEWPOINTS, he holds that suspense is the more important to audience appreciation of a motion picture story; surprise is just a momentary shock and the detective story is too intellectual.

He explained the use of suspense by comparing two of his own pictures — "Psycho" and the new "Topaz."

"If you recall in 'Psycho,' the only violence came in the early sequences when Janet Leigh was knifed to death while taking a shower. Incidentally, that sequence took a week to film and required 78 different camera set-ups, yet at no time were Miss Leigh and the knife filmed together — that impression was created by skilled editing of the separate film.

"But thereafter in 'Psycho,' there was no violence, yet the suspense built up to a heart-stopping crescendo simply because of that early sequence of violence — the audience involved itself in the story."

HITCHCOCK uses a slightly different technique of the same philosophy in "Topaz." The Leon Uris book is based on disclosures by a former chief of French intelligence of a spy scandal in the De Gaulle government at the time of the Cuban missile crisis. Readers of the book will recall the rather sudden identification of the villain in the final pages of the action, an identity not even been hinted at previously.

"We may be accused of taking liberties with the book," Hitchcock said, "but we bring in suspicion earlier in the story so that the viewer is aware of the course the story is taking even if the participants on the scene are not."

"This disclosure is the chief difference between suspense and surprise. In surprise, we can have a group of people gathered around a conference table and have a bomb go off underneath — BOOM! it all comes so suddenly and is all over so suddenly that the audience experiences only shock."

"But in suspense, we show the audience the bomb ticking away under the table while the conference proceeds. Then someone touches the device with a foot, realizes the danger and tosses the explosive out a window, where it explodes with an enormous roar, but no one inside is injured. That is suspense — the audience knew all along what would probably happen, but not when or how."

UNIVERSAL PICTURES had already purchased film rights to the Uris book before Hitchcock was brought to the scene. Since he is under exclusive contract to Universal and since the story of "Topaz" lends itself ideally to the special talents of Hitchcock, he was asked to direct the film.

"The story in the book is far ranging, including action in Washington, Paris, Copenhagen, New York's Harlem, La Guardia Airport and even Cuba, so we made every effort for authenticity of the scenes involved," Hitchcock said. "I even sent a foreign cameraman into Cuba to film places there which we duplicated on the Universal lot on the West Coast. For the other locations for the most part we used actual scenes, even including the 'safe house' in Washington where defectors from Communist governments are housed during the in transition from tyranny to freedom."

HITCHCOCK FELT that "Topaz," to reach full appreciation from theater audiences required unfamiliar faces for believability, so he cast only one top American actor in the picture — John Forsythe in the starring role of

Michael Nordstrom, an American CIA agent. The other principal roles are taken by Frederick Stafford, a European actor virtually unknown in the United States, in the central character of Andre Devereaux, a French intelligence agent, and Dany Robin, the French actress who portrays Nicole Devereaux. Other roles are played by Karin Dor, Michel Piccoli, Philippe Noiret, Claude Jade and Kichel Subor — have you ever heard their names before?

Although Uris based "Topaz" on an event involving politics, Hitchcock said every effort had been made to take "all that's political out, leaving a motion picture of suspense, thrills and adventure."  
"Topaz" is scheduled to open Wednesday, Dec. 24, at Apollo, Astro, Capri, Casa Linda, Gemini and Preston Royal.

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